

The Gramophone Shop, Inc.

Record Supplement

for

May, 1944

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CON	Continental	PAR	Paraclete
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THE GRAMOPHONE SHOP, Inc.

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290 PARK AVENUE

NEW YORK 17, N. Y.

The Gramophone Shop, Inc.

The World's Best Recorded Music
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NEW YORK CITY



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Vol. VIII

Record Supplement for May, 1944

No. 5

BACH (JOHANN SEBASTIAN)

BACH: *Orchestral Transcriptions* (trans. Stokowski). Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski. Three 12" records (6 sides) in Set VM-963; price complete with album \$3.67.

Since these discs contain just five more of the heaven-knows-how-many "free transcriptions for orchestra" by the supreme Bach-biter of them all, there seems little that one can say that is not already ancient history. They are again beautifully played by the Philadelphia Orchestra, and ably, if somewhat sentimentally, conducted.

Fans of Palestrina, however, might well question Victor's ascription of composer of the selections, "whose latent possibilities he [Stokowski] has translated into the magnificent colors of the modern orchestra." One is the Italian's motet for four voices, *Adoramus Te*.

The acoustical properties of the recordings are so variable that one cannot avoid the suspicion that these are morceaux left over from several years of Stokowski-Philadelphia issues. But clarity and ample sonority are characteristic of each, and except for an occasional wobble in the *Es is vollbracht*, the engineers rate applause.

Included among the Bachiana is No. 3 (in E Minor) of *Eight Little Preludes and Fugues*, for Organ; the *Chorale-Prelude*, "Ich ruf' zu dir, Herr Jesu Christ"; the contralto aria, *Es is vollbracht*, from the *Passion according to St. John*; and the amusing first movement from No. 1 (in E Flat) of six sonatas in the *Clavierbuchlein*, whose contents were written as practicepieces for the composer's son, Wilhelm Friedmann.

BACH-STOKOWSKI: *Partita No. 3, E Major*, for Unaccompanied Violin—*Prelude & MENDELSSOHN: A Midsummer's Night Dream—Scherzo*, Op. 61, No. 1. All-American Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski. 12" record (2 sides) No. C-11983-D; price \$1.05.

With such an unadulterated abomination as this disc, one's first tendency is to label it as such and forget it. But an even mildly curious reader is entitled to some indication of *why* your reviewer's reaction is closely akin to disgust.

It would hardly seem to be a radical request that even the most pretentious, inflated orchestral transcription bear some direct relation to the original composition. But in the fine Bach piece Stokowski has abandoned all pretense of justice to the composer by chopping and distorting even the basic melodic line to produce, still-born, a *Stokowski Preludio* that is just about perfect fodder for a carousel calliope.

The delightful Mendelssohn *Scherzo* suffers no such metamorphosis from Stokowski, the transcriber. But what this "gossamer and joyous" work (I quote from the Columbia advertising) undergoes at the hands of Stokowski, the conductor, would better have been described as a *burned-to-a-crisp* performance."

Add the total roughness and technical inaccuracies of the All-American Orchestra to their maestro's rushed tempos and insensitive phrasing, and gossamer joys are drowned in a torrent of sonorities.

At a time when shortages of essential material and manpower leave record shelves begging for an adequate supply of recognized recording classics (including two excellent performances on Columbia discs of the Mendelssohn *Scherzo*), C-11983-D furnishes another first-rate argument against keeping up the farce of making "new" releases each month, just because a company has unissued masters in its "icebox."

BLOCH (ERNEST)

BLOCH: Baal Shem (Pictures of Chassidic Life)—No. 2, Nigun. Mischa Elman (violin) & Vladimir Padwa (piano). 12" record (2 sides) No. V-11-8575; price \$1.05.

If this disc is an example, there is apparently a "high" beyond which fidelity of recording should not go. From Elman one hears a plenitude not only of sweet violin tone but also of the very scraping of the bow across the strings—a factor which occasionally adds overtones not wholly desirable, even in the interests of reality. Otherwise, one can have nothing but praise for superlative engineering.

Indeed, the fine recording of V-11-8575 amplifies the eloquent playing of Padwa and helps make it an integral part of what is, in a final analysis, a fervent violin-piano duet. This is in marked contrast to the dull sound of Leopold Mittman's piano on the old, constricted Columbia recording of *Nigun* (C-17134-D), which only emphasizes the tepid, obedient accompaniment Mittman provides for Milstein's almost too forthright fiddling.

As for Elman, he is in top form. There will be some to say that he makes a "production" out of his mastery of the technical difficulties inherent in the notes, and that his untempered determination to squeeze the last drop of passion from every detail results in a reading dangerously close to sentimental. But if the performing artist evinces even greater admiration than we for this fine work, who is the average listener to object?

For us, then, a best bet among the single discs for April.

CHAUSSON (ERNEST)

CHAUSSON: Chanson Perpétuelle, Op. 37. Maggie Teyte (soprano), Gerald Moore (piano), & Blech String Quartet. 12" imported record (2 sides) No. G-DB6159; price \$2.62.

The relationship between supply and demand being what it is these days, it would seem best in this review to say nothing more than that Maggie Teyte is on deck

again, in a quite beautiful song by a composer who is more and more these days being accorded the recognition he deserves.

If you're still with us, Miss Teyte's unique artistry shows not the slightest sign of failing health, Mr. Moore's accompaniments are as pointed as ever, and the Blech String Quartet supplies luscious string tone. As for the recording and pressing . . .

CHOPIN (FREDERIC)

CHOPIN: Seventeen Polish Songs, Op. 74 (arr. Liszt)—No. 1, the Maiden's Wish & No. 15, The Return Home & SCHUMANN: Spanisches Liederspiel, Op. 74 (arr. Tausig)—No. 9, Der Contrabandiste. Sergei Rachmaninoff (piano). 12" record (2 sides) No. V-11-8593; price \$1.05.

There is rather more hammer than felt in the percussive recorded sound of Rachmaninoff's piano on this disk, and the hard-bitten drive of his playing is hardly conducive to evoking much Chopinesque poetry. But since there is as much Liszt as Chopin in the arrangements, these showpieces can be recommended to Rachmaninoff enthusiasts as excellent examples of his dash and animation. The companion piece is minor, but effective, Schumann, not overly elaborated by Tausig, and dazzlingly played by the late Russian.

Since the recording is clearly several years old, one cannot cavil at the somewhat dead acoustics of the studio. But Victor surfaces in general this month make us more than ever grateful to hear that an increased supply of shellac will very shortly be available to manufacturers.

DOHNANYI (ERNST VON)

DOHNANYI: Quintet, C Minor, Op. 1 & Ruralia Hungarica, Op. 32a. Roth String Quartet (in the Quintet) & Edward Kilenyi (piano, in both). Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set CM-546†; price complete with album \$4.73.

The major work in this album-of-the-month is, like the Foote *Serenade* (see below), unhackneyed, melodious, and instantly likable. And like the Hindemith *Sonata* (also see below), it is superlatively constructed and remarkably expressive. Indeed, the *Quintet* has a historical significance directly related to its value as a score. It is that all but non-existent phenomenon—an Opus 1 which is generally conceded to be a masterpiece.

This is not to say that it is daringly original. Written in 1895, when the composer was eighteen, the score is

steeped in the romanticism of late nineteenth century Germany, and the voices of Schumann and Brahms resound from every page . . . the latter so emphatically, that the work has often been referred to as "Brahms' Second Piano Quintet." But the impress of a fresh, young talent is everywhere evident, and in matters of ease and freedom of expression, the Hungarian pupil frequently puts his teacher to shame.

As if to complete the cycle of master-disciple relationships, CM-546 features the technically assured piano playing of Dohnanyi's star pupil, the young American virtuoso, Edward Kilenyi. His interpretation is warmly felt and undeniably authoritative, but a pronounced tendency to underline the opportunities for display results in more percussive accentuation than our taste deems necessary.

The Roth String Quartet gives the pianist suave support, and Columbia engineers have been generous equally to individual and ensemble tone. Surfaces hardly match the recording.

Kilenyi devotes the odd eighth side to a discourse of the witty *Ruralia Hungarica*, Op. 32a, an ingratiating sample of Dohnanyi's more mature style. The colorful folk melodies are treated with just enough acid to prevent their cloying, and Kilenyi tosses them off with agreeable dispatch.

FOOTE (ARTHUR)

FOOTE: *Suite for Strings*, Op. 63. Boston Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Serge Koussevitsky. Two 12" records (4 sides) in Set VM-962†; price complete with album \$2.62.

It is always pleasant to be able to list the addition of a new American work to the recorded repertoire, even when the composition itself is vintage 1910, with roots that were, even then, conservative middle European.

Born in Salem, Mass., in 1853, Arthur Foote was the only important American composer of his generation to be educated entirely in his own country. He spent most of his life as a free-lance teacher, organist, and pianist not far from Boston, and when he died in 1937 he was everywhere recognized as the dean of the distinguished New England school.

Suite for Strings, Op. 63, is typical of his fine workmanship, melodic freshness, warm feeling, good taste, and conservative eclecticism. The first movement is perhaps the most "original," for the lovely *Pizzicato* unabashedly reflects the famous *Scherzo* of Tchaikovsky's *Fourth Symphony*, and the influence of Brahms rises to such a pitch that the final movement seems but

a skillful transcription of the *Fugue* from the German master's familiar *Variations on a Handel Theme*.

Composed in 1907, *Suite for Strings* was played for the first time on April 16, 1909 by the Boston Symphony, conducted by Max Fiedler, to whom the work is dedicated. It is quite appropriate that the orchestra which performed so many of his compositions during his lifetime should be accorded the honor of recording this one, and they do it full justice.

The engineers have collaborated enthusiastically in making sure that the vitality of Koussevitsky's reading and the delectable tone of the Boston strings are given full opportunity to reveal their quality. Surfaces are good.

A pleasant composition, superbly performed and recorded.

FOSS: Dedication—see **HINDEMITH: Sonata**, E Major.

GRIFFES (CHARLES TOMLINSON)

GRIFFES: *By a Lonely Forest Pathway* & **SACCO:** *Rapunzel*. Eleanor Steber (soprano) & James Quillian (piano). 10" record (2 sides) No. V-10-1071; price 79c.

With so many years' background as both student and teacher in Berlin, Griffes might well have been expected to set a German text for voice and piano, but one could hardly forecast that *Auf Geheimen Waldespfade* (which Miss Steber sings here, in English) and the other three songs without opus numbers, composed in 1909, would emerge with such a French flavor. Hybrid in character or not, they are lieder of affecting loveliness and should be heard more often.

John Sacco's accompaniment for Adelaide Crapsey's poem is also ingratiating music, but all we could catch of the lyrics was a maiden's reiterated reference to her long hair. Our suspicion is that the engineering, rather than Miss Steber's diction, is to blame. Certainly V-10-1071 is far below Victor's recent recording level, and surfaces are poor.

Miss Steber delivers both songs sensitively, in a light agreeable soprano. But she is not yet quite mistress of breath control, and her tone here has a bit too much vibrato for maximum effect. She is nevertheless an artist of great promise.

HINDEMITH (PAUL)

HINDEMITH: Sonata, E Major (1935) & Foss: Dedication. Edgar Ortenberg (violin) & Lukas Foss (piano). Two 12" records (4 sides) in Set MW-300†; price complete with album \$2.62.

Those who are accustomed to connect the name of Hindemith with dry, mechanical counterpoint and wildly atonal harmony are in for quite a surprise when they hear (and they *should* hear) MW-300, for its appeal is far from merely intellectual.

Let it be admitted at the outset that the *Sonata in E Major* is contrapuntal in construction, but altho it modulates freely, it rarely wanders far from its main key, and the opposition of instruments is constructed on pleasantly melodic lines. This is, in short, a product of Hindemith's current ("humanized") period, and almost immediately accessible.

The score is in three sections, played without a break—a pastoral opening, a short pause for meditation, and a rhythmically gay finale. A really interesting work, which radiates clarity of purpose and is typical only of Hindemith's unfailing craftsmanship.

It is given a sincere, but uneven, performance by Edgar Ortenberg, the new second violinist of the Budapest String Quartet, and Lukas Foss, the 22-year-old composer-pianist who won a Pulitzer Prize in 1941.

The fourth side is given over to Foss' own *Dedication*, which need defer on no count to the work of his better-known contemporary. A sensitive, eloquent, and neatly-constructed piece of which Hindemith himself might well be proud.

Hargail Records once again rate our grateful thanks for another fine "first" recording of fine music. Piano and violin are evenly balanced, and there is excellent "room" fullness. Surfaces are good.

LIDDLE: How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings, see **SCHUBERT: Ave Maria**.

PUCCINI (GIACOMO)

PUCCINI: Tosca—Recondita Armonia, Act I. & VERDI: La Traviata—Sempre Libera, Act I. Enrico Caruso (tenor, in the Puccini) & Lucrezia Bori (soprano, in the Verdi), & Victory Symphony Orchestra. 12" record (2 sides) No. V-11-8568; price \$1.05.

Opera-lovers can rejoice. The indomitable Caruso voice is in fine fettle on this reissue, and the dubbing job on the "Victory Symphony Orchestra" is one of

the best yet, despite the thinness of the original orchestra. This is late Caruso recording, both vocally and technically, for his robust, rich voice has a mellow flavor wanting in the more heroic early Acoustical disks, and the engineers have caught a surprising range of fidelity. Those who own the more youthful and somewhat subtler performances of Bjoerling (V-4372) and Lugo (V-2143) will certainly want to own V-11-8568 as a fascinating contrast.

We are not cheer-leaders for the affected, labored singing of a Bori who was clearly past her prime when this recording was made. She lacks both the ease and warmth of such out-moded recordings as Galli-Curci's and Sembrich's, and she omits not only most of the challenging runs and arpeggios but also the final cadenza in its entirety. It is nevertheless a representative example of the kind of florid singing that already seems as remote as the acting of Bernhardt. Surfaces are satisfactory.

SACCO: Rapunzel, see **GRIFFES: By a Lonely Forest Pathway**.

SCHUBERT (FRANZ PETER)

SCHUBERT: Ave Maria, Op. 52, No. 6 and LIDDLE: How Lovely Are Thy Dwellings. Richard Crooks (tenor) & Victor Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Nathaniel Shilkret. 12" record (2 sides) No. V-11-8570; price \$1.05.

If one can judge by the number of recordings, Schubert's *Ave Maria* is one of those ubiquitous compositions which are to singers what *To be or not to be* is to actors—the sine qua non of fame. In the *Gramophone Shop Encyclopedia* some twenty versions are indicated as more or less available for the eager collector of *Ave Mariana*, if such there be.

And there *must* be — else why, when there are at least two fine interpretations already on Victor disks and when shellac is so badly needed, would this company bother to issue another?

Perhaps Victor was simply trying to supply a substantial masculine challenge to the feminine versions which, if considered qualitatively, line up at the top of the list as a perfect refutation of the old saw about the relative weakness of women... Elizabeth Schumann's (V-8423), albeit with orchestra, and Marian Anderson's (V-14210) with piano, albeit with tone that is somewhat cold.

The best the men have been able to muster thus far is some tight, constricted singing by Charles Kullman (C-9130M) in English. A plethora of white tones and

uncertainty of pitch hardly help him achieve his sensitive intentions, but his interpretation is certainly closer to Schubert than the Mother Machreepy approach of John McCormack (V-6927) in English with full orchestra and chorus.

It would be a pleasure, then, to hail V-11-8570-A without reservation. It is patently the loudest recording, and no one could question the virility of Crooks' double-forte approach. But sustained trumpety brilliance seems singularly inappropriate to this music, and the artist's handling of the Latin text indicates little understanding of its import.

Nor does he seem much more at home with the English verses from Psalm LXXXIV, in the second-rate setting by Samuel Liddle, composer of *Abide with Me*. Martial gusto is again a quality unsuited to these quiet lines, and Crooks' annoying tendency towards nasality is no boon to otherwise good diction.

Unfortunately, V-11-8570-B is the only available disk version of the Liddle opus, if you want it.

SCHUBERT: Die Junge Nonne, Op. 43, No. 1 & Schwanengesang—No. 13, Der Doppelgänger. Lotte Lehmann (soprano) & Paul Ulanowsky (piano). 12" record (2 sides) No. C-71509-D; price \$1.05.

The most recent entry in the Schwanengesang sweepstakes is a lucky No. 13. It provides us at long last with an opportunity to quote an advertising blurb without blushing:

"Lotte Lehmann more than justifies her title of 'Queen of Lieder Singers' with her intensely warm and human projection of these dramatic art songs by Schubert. She gives meaning to every nuance, every changing mood, and her diction is so clear that not one word escapes the listener.

"The piano accompaniments play an important part in these two songs, and Paul Ulanowsky performs them with understanding."

There are better examples of Columbia recording technique in the catalogue, but the balance between singer and piano is commendable, and the monitoring is excellent.

Although neither song is a recording "first," C-71509-D would be welcome even if it were less well done, for there is no reasonable challenge to either performance on domestic single disks.

SCHUMANN: Spanisches Liederspiel, Op. 74 (arr. Tausig)—No. 9, Der Contrabandiste, see CHOPIN: Seventeen Polish Songs, Op. 74.

SHOSTAKOVITCH (DIMITRI)

SHOSTAKOVITCH: The United Nations & ALEXANDER-MIKHAILOV-REGISTAN: Anthem of the U. S. S. R. Paul Robeson (bass) & Keynote Chorus and Orchestra, conducted (in English) by Charles Lichter. 12" record (2 sides) No. K-1200-A; price \$1.05.

It will probably not cause too big a breach in Russo-American relations to say that the translations of these patriotic hymns into English (the Shostakovich by H. J. Rome, the *New Russian National Anthem* by H. Zaret) are hardly likely to be included in any *Oxford Anthology of English Verse*.

"Serviceable" seems about as good a word as any, although the texts would undoubtedly sound more impressive in the original tongue. As for the music, all four composers were no doubt motivated by the noblest emotions.

Paul Robeson sings both paens with rich tone, superb diction, and more fervor than he might muster for a *Dies Irae*, and he gets obedient support from the orchestra. The engineers give the star perhaps a bit too much attention, with the result that the enthusiastic, finely disciplined chorus seems to be rehearsing in a different (and more reverberant) studio. Surfaces are good.

ARTUR RUBINSTEIN ON RECORDS

The late, great Polish composer-pianist-patriot, Paderewski, had a long and distinguished career touring the world as an incredible master of ambidexterity, "the grand manner," and the best music of the nineteenth century, with special attention to the works of the even more famous Polish composer-pianist-patriot, Frederic Chopin.

Although he will doubtless not welcome the analogy, Artur Rubinstein is essentially the third in this pianofortuitous lineage. Born in Ludz, Poland, in 1886, this composer (he has written keyboard and chamber music)-pianist-patriot began, at the age of 12, his lifetime of world-touring as an incredible master of etc. etc. etc. Small wonder that he quickly became in England the same boxoffice draw that Paderewski was in America. Or that, when he returned to this country in 1937 after a long absence, his very first concert sent not just critics, intelligentsia, and piano students, but ordinary music lovers (including a generous sprinkling of the "bobby sox" trade) scurrying for tickets.

Reasons for this fairly universal carolling of the Rubinstein song are firmly imprisoned on discs, almost all of which are first-rate performances and (luckily) first-rate recordings. As we stated last month in our second review of the Chopin *Concerto No. 1* (in VM-418), Rubinstein has "a controlled rubato, great beauty of tone, wide variety of mood, exquisite phrasing, and unparalleled technique."

A single hearing of VM-418 alone should convince the skeptics that such extravagant praise is not unwarranted. But it might also suggest what Rubinstein himself seems to know — that his mannered style and pyro-technique are best suited to romantic compositions. His otherwise superlative performance of the Mozart *Concerto No. 23*, K. 488 is marred for some ears by an excess of Passion, which leaves Composure rather panting for breath. This, be it noted, is Rubinstein's only recorded essay in any pre-Beethoven idiom.

An unquestioned flair for the rhythmic is more than enough motivation for his avowed affinity for twentieth century Spanish and Russian scores (he is especially fond of Albeniz, DeFalla, and Stravinsky, who has dedicated to him a piano arrangement of *Petrouchka*). But paradoxically, a seeming inability to produce tone that is anything but liquid, velvety, and sinuous makes his performances of the more astringent moderns inappropriately pretty and curiously anachronistic. Perhaps that is why examples on disks of his readings of contemporary music are non-existent.

Like his famous friends and confreres, Feuermann and Heifetz (with whom he has recorded magnificent readings of such incomparable trios as the Beethoven and Schubert in B Flat Major, and the Brahms in B Major), Rubinstein will tackle any style from Scarlatti's to Prokofieff's with results that are almost monotonously good. But as the list of his recordings implies, he is most completely at home with Schumann, Tchaikovsky, Brahms, and — to bring our essay round full circle — Frederic Chopin.

His subtle color palette and great command of the pedal are nowhere shown to better advantage than in his definitive discourse of the Chopin *Mazurkas*, *Nocturnes*, and *Polonaises*, the recorded sound of which is as faithful as any yet achieved of the piano. As with his recorded performances of music by other composers, we cannot guarantee to have his Chopin always in stock, but any of the albums and single discs listed on the following pages are, almost without exception, worthy of a place in any representative record library.

THE RUBINSTEIN RECORDINGS

BEETHOVEN

Sonata No. 26, E Flat ("Les Adieux"), Op. 81a.

Two 12" records (4 sides) in Set VM-858†; price complete with album \$2.62.

Trio No. 7, B Flat, Op. 97 ("Archduke"). With Jascha Heifetz (violin) & Emanuel Feuermann ('cello). Five 12" records (10 sides) in Set VM-949†; price complete with album \$5.77.

BRAHMS

Intermezzo No. 4, A Minor, Op. 76, No. 7. One side of 12" record No. V-11-8140 in Set VM-893.

Intermezzo No. 9, E Flat, Op. 117, No. 1. One side of 12" record No. V-11-8138 in Set VM-893; price complete with album \$5.77.

Intermezzo No. 10, B Flat, Op. 117, No. 2. One side of 12" record No. V-11-8138 in Set VM-893.

Intermezzo No. 15, E Flat Minor, Op. 118, No. 6. One side of 12" record No. V-11-8139 in Set VM-893.

Intermezzo No. 18, C Major, Op. 119, No. 3. One side of 12" record No. V-11-8140 in Set VM-893.

Rhapsody No. 1, B Minor, Op. 79, No. 1. One side of 12" record No. V-11-8141 in Set VM-893.

Rhapsody No. 2, G Minor, Op. 70, No. 3. One side of 12" record No. V-14946 (with Schumann: Romance, Op. 28, No. 2). Price \$1.05.

Rhapsody No. 3, E Flat, Op. 119, No. 4. One side of 12" record No. V-11-8140 in Set VM-893.

Trio No. 1, B Major, Op. 8. With Jascha Heifetz (violin) & Emanuel Feuermann ('cello). Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set VM-883†; price complete with album \$4.72.

CHOPIN

Concerto No. 1, E Minor, Op. 11. With London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by John Barbirolli. Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set VM-418†; price complete with album \$4.72.

MAZURKAS

Vol. 1. Five 12" records (10 sides) in Set VM-626; price complete with album \$5.77.

No. 1, F Sharp Minor, Op. 6, No. 1.

No. 2, C Sharp Minor, Op. 6, No. 2.

No. 3, E Major, Op. 6, No. 3.

No. 4, E Flat Minor, Op. 6, No. 4.

No. 5, B Flat, Op. 7, No. 1.

No. 6, A Minor, Op. 7, No. 2.

No. 7, F Minor, Op. 7, No. 3.

No. 8, A Flat, Op. 7, No. 4.

No. 9, C Major, Op. 7, No. 5.

No. 10, B Flat, Op. 17, No. 1.

No. 11, E. Minor, Op. 17, No. 2.

No. 12, A Flat, Op. 17, No. 3.

No. 13, A Minor, Op. 17, No. 4.

No. 14, G Minor, Op. 24, No. 1.

No. 15, C Major, Op. 24, No. 2.

No. 16, A Flat, Op. 24, No. 3.

No. 18, C Minor, Op. 30, No. 1.

- No. 20, D Flat, Op. 30, No. 3.
 No. 27, E Minor, Op. 41, No. 2.
 No. 29, A Flat, Op. 41, No. 4.

Vol. II. Five 12" records (10 sides) in Set VM-656; price complete with album \$5.77.

- No. 17, B Flat Minor, Op. 24, No. 4.
 No. 21, C Sharp Minor, Op. 30, No. 4.
 No. 23, D Major, Op. 33, No. 2.
 No. 24, C Major, Op. 33, No. 3.
 No. 25, B Minor, Op. 33, No. 4.
 No. 26, C Sharp Minor, Op. 41, No. 1.
 No. 28, B Major, Op. 41, No. 3.
 No. 30, G Major, Op. 50, No. 1.
 No. 31, A Flat, Op. 50, No. 2.
 No. 32, C Sharp Minor, Op. 50, No. 3.
 No. 33, B Major, Op. 56, No. 1.
 No. 39, B Major, Op. 63, No. 1.
 No. 40, F Minor, Op. 63, No. 2.
 No. 41, C Sharp Minor, Op. 63, No. 3.
 No. 49, F Minor, Op. 68, No. 4.

Vol. III. Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set VM-691; price complete with album \$4.72.

- No. 19, B Minor, Op. 30, No. 2.
 No. 22, G Sharp Minor, Op. 33, No. 1.
 No. 34, C Major, Op. 56, No. 2.
 No. 35, C Minor, Op. 56, No. 3.
 No. 36, A Minor, Op. 59, No. 1.
 No. 37, A Flat Major, Op. 59, No. 2.
 No. 38, F Sharp Minor, Op. 59, No. 3.
 No. 42, G Major, Op. 67, No. 1.
 No. 43, G Minor, Op. 67, No. 2.
 No. 44, C Major, Op. 67, No. 3.
 No. 45, A Minor, Op. 67, No. 4.
 No. 46, C Major, Op. 68, No. 1.
 No. 47, A Minor, Op. 68, No. 2.
 No. 48, F Major, Op. 68, No. 3.
 No. 50, A Minor, "Notre Temps".
 No. 51, A Minor, (Posth.)

NOCTURNES

Vol. I. Six 12" records (12 sides) in Set VM-461; price complete with album \$6.82.

- No. 1, B Flat Minor, Op. 9, No. 1.
 No. 2, E Flat Major, Op. 9, No. 2.
 No. 3, B Major, Op. 9, No. 3.

- No. 4, F Major, Op. 15, No. 1.
 No. 5, F Sharp, Op. 15, No. 2.
 No. 6, G Minor, Op. 15, No. 3.
 No. 7, C Sharp Minor, Op. 27, No. 1.
 No. 8, D Flat, Op. 27, No. 2.
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Vol. II. Five 12" records (10 sides) in Set VM-462; price complete with album \$5.77.

- No. 9, B Major, Op. 32, No. 1.
 No. 10, A Flat, Op. 32, No. 2.
 No. 13, C Minor, Op. 48, No. 1.
 No. 14, F Sharp Minor, Op. 48, No. 2.
 No. 15, F Minor, Op. 55, No. 1.
 No. 16, E Flat, Op. 55, No. 2.
 No. 17, B Major, Op. 62, No. 1.
 No. 18, E Major, Op. 62, No. 2.
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Eight 12" records (16 sides) in Set VM-353†; price complete with album \$8.92.

- No. 1, C Sharp Minor, Op. 26, No. 1.
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 No. 3, A Major, Op. 40, No. 1.
 No. 4, C Minor, Op. 40, No. 2.
 No. 5, F Sharp Minor, Op. 44.
 No. 6, A Flat, Op. 53.
 No. 7, A Flat, Op. 61.
 Andante Sptanato, Op. 22.
 Grande Polonaise, E Flat, Op. 22.

SCHERZI

Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set VM-189†; price complete with album \$4.72.

- No. 1, B Minor, Op. 20.
 No. 2, B Flat Minor, Op. 31.
 No. 3, C Sharp Minor, Op. 39.
 No. 4, E Major, Op. 54.

DE FALLA-RUBINSTEIN

L'Amour Sorcier—Danse de la Frayeur, Danse Rituelle de Feu. 10" record (2 sides) No. V-1596; price 79c.

FRANCK

Sonata, A Major. With Jascha Heifetz (violin).
Three 12" records (6 sides) in Set VM-449†; price complete with album \$3.67.

GRIEG

Concerto, A Minor, Op. 16. With the Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Eugene Ormandy. Three 12" records (6 sides) in Set VM-900†; price complete with album \$3.67.

LISZT

Liebestraum, No. 3. One side of 12" record No. V-36337 (with Rubinstein: Valse Caprice). Price \$1.05.

MOZART

Concerto No. 23, A Major, K. 488. With London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by John Barbirolli. Three 12" records (6 sides) in Set VM-147†; price complete with album \$3.67.

RACHMANINOFF

Prelude in C Sharp Minor, Op. 3, No. 2. One side of 12" record No. V-14276 (with Schubert: Fantasia Sonata, G Major—Minuet and Trio). Price \$1.05.

RUBINSTEIN

Valse Caprice. One side of 12" record No. V-36337 (with Liszt: Liebestraum, No. 3). Price \$1.05.

SCHUBERT

Fantasia Sonata, G Major, Op. 78—Minuet & Trio. One side of 12" record No. V-14276 (with Rachmaninoff: Prelude, C Sharp Minor, Op. 3, No. 2). Price \$1.05.

Trio No. 1, B Flat Major, Op. 99. With Jascha Heifetz (violin) & Emanuel Feuermann ('cello). Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set VM-923†; price complete with album \$4.72.

SCHUMANN

Romance, F Sharp, Op. 28, No. 2. One side of 12" record No. V-14946 (with Brahms: Rhapsody, G Minor, Op. 79, No. 2). Price \$1.05.

TCHAIKOWSKY

Concerto No. 1, B Flat Minor, Op. 23. With the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by John Barbirolli. Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set VM-180†; price complete with album \$4.72.

Concerto No. 1, B Flat Minor, Op. 23—First Movement (incomplete). With the London Symphony Orchestra, conducted by John Barbirolli. 12" record (2 sides) No. V-7802; price \$1.05.

COLLECTIONS

CARMEN JONES. Muriel Smith (Carmen), Carlotta Franzell (Micaela-Cindy Lou), Luther Saxon (Don Jose-Corp. Joe), Glen Bryant (Escamillo-Husky Miller), Carmen Jones Orchestra, directed by Joseph Littau & Carmen Jones Chorus, directed by Robert Shaw. Six 12" records (12 sides) in Set No. DA-366; price complete with album \$6.82.

Excerpts from the smash Billy Rose presentation of Bizet's music and Oscar Hammerstein lyrics, as sung by the all-negro cast in the current New York production, include: *Prelude, Finale, Dat's Love (Habanera), Dat's Our Man, You Talk Just Lak My Ma, My Joe (Micaela's Aria), There's a Cafe on the Corner (Seguidilla), The Cards Don' Lie (Card Song), Beat Out Dat Rhythm on a Drum (Gypsy Song), Dis Flower (Flower Song), Stan' Up an' Fight (Torador Song), Whizzin' Along De Track (Quintet).*

THE MERRY WIDOW. Kitty Carlisle (soprano), Wilbur Evans (baritone), Felix Knight (tenor), Lisette Vereia, & the Merry Widow Orchestra and Chorus, directed by Isaac Van Grove. Six 10" records (12 sides) in Set DA-364; price complete with album \$5.25.

Continuing its presentations of recorded selections from the smash musical hits on Broadway, Decca presents this month the most popular melodies from the revival of Franz Lehar's perennial operetta. There is a helpful brochure included with the album, and the participating talent is largely drawn from the current production:

- DA-23298 *Overture, Act I—Orchestra.*
Finale, Act III—Orchestra.
- DA-23299 *In Marsovia, Act I—Carlisle.*
Merry Widow Waltz, Act III—Carlisle & Evans.
- DA-23300 *Maxim's, Act I—Evans.*
Girls at Maxim's, Act III—Vereia & Chorus.
- DA-23301 *Finale, Act I—Carlisle & Evans.*
Finale, Act II—Carlisle & Evans.
- DA-23302 *Down in Dear Marsovia, Act II—Orchestra & Chorus.*
Love in My Heart, Act II—Knight.
- DA-23303 *Vilia, Act II—Carlisle & Chorus.*
Women, Act II—Evans, Knight, & Chorus.

FOUR FAVORITE WALTZES. Columbia Broadcasting Symphony, conducted by Howard Barlow. Two 12" records (2 sides) in Set CM-X240; price complete with album \$2.63.

Here is an album to rank with Victor's infamous "Heart of the Symphony" and "Heart of the Piano Con-

certo," for CM-X240 would more properly have been called "Heart of the Waltz." The bare melodic bones of Tschaiikowsky's *Waltz of the Flowers* from *The Nutcracker*, Strauss' *Tales from the Vienna Woods* and *Blue Danube*, and Sibelius' *Valse Triste* are laid open for your inspection, by the simple expedient of cutting each one to fit a single record side.

As such, CM-X240 can be heartily recommended to those who must have a *Reader's Digest* version of rhythmic tone-poems which, even in their original form, are unlikely to tax the intelligence of a reasonably bright 12-year-old.

The high spot of artistic integrity in this album is attained by "Steinweiss," whose imaginative cover design is paradoxically almost brutally frank in suggesting the overemphasis on finicky rubati in Barlow's otherwise good conducting.

Columbia engineers have captured the raspy tone and uncertain attack of the CBSymphony with rather painful fidelity, and surfaces are much better than average.

SECOND REVIEWS

MEYERBEER (GIACOMO)

MEYERBEER: Le Prophete—Coronation March, Act IV. & ELGAR: Imperial March, Op. 32. BBC Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Sir Adrian Boult. 12" imported record (2 sides) No. G-DB3163; price \$2.62.

When an oft-recorded warhorse bobs up on the lists for yet another time, one's first reaction is to dismiss it with a mere statement of the fact that it is available. But G-DB3163 cannot be bade good day so easily.

An old warhorse becomes front page gramophonic news when the latest recording contains an unconventional performance or is acoustically superior to its predecessors. G-DB3163 is news on both counts.

Strictly speaking, this is neither the latest nor the best interpretation of Meyerbeer's infamous *Coronation March*. But the newest recording is the worst performance, and the best performance is one of the oldest recordings. G-DB3163 is the happiest of mediums, for it is only a shade less rousing than Mengelberg's version (on V-7104), and recording-wise it leaves competition completely out of the running.

Indeed, G-DB3163 is one of a handful of recordings that literally must be heard to be believed. It would be an excellent bargain even if the music it contained were infinitely less attractive than the stirring marches imprisoned here.

The statelier Elgar opus is the same performance which fills the odd eighth side of VM-929 (Holst's *The Planets*), reviewed in the *March Supplement*. Constant readers need hardly be told why the sound of one is not identical with that of the other.

MOZART (WOLFGANG AMADEUS)

MOZART: Le Nozze di Figaro — Complete (excepting recitative). Glyndebourne Festival Opera Company, conducted by Fritz Busch. Seventeen 12" records (33 sides) in Sets VM-313, 314, 315†; price complete with albums \$18.90.

For most collectors who do not already own VM-313, 314, and 315, it will be enough of a review herewith to state that all three albums of the famous Glyndebourne Festival recording of Mozart's most famous comic opera are again in stock (in automatic couplings only).

If any there be who have not heard the news about this monumental gramophonic achievement, let us repeat forthwith that it is a magnificent bargain — one of the towering masterpieces not only of opera but of the entire musical repertoire, sensitively and eloquently performed, and imprisoned in a recording that, if not as impressive now as it was in 1935, is still beautifully balanced and tonally satisfying.

Perhaps the greatest tribute one can pay is to say that the majority of individual records in these albums contains the best performances, artistically and technically, yet available on disks. This, without mentioning the admirable unity of style and spirit produced by the superb conducting of Busch.

By way of cavilling at something, your reviewer must admit finding the cast more uneven in quality than that in, say, the Glyndebourne *Così fan Tutte*. Willie Domgraf-Fassbaender (Figaro) and Heddle Nash (Basilio), in particular, and all the men in general are more vocally satisfying than the women . . . and more consistently intelligible, even when allowance is made for the high tessitura and rapid tempo of many of the soprano parts. But most of what little confusion occurs in concerted numbers is due not so much to the lighter voices and less careful diction of the three principal women as to the fact that they are all sopranos and all sopranos with strikingly similar tonal coloring.

Carping criticism is this, admittedly, since the witty libretto is surprisingly comprehensible, even without the detailed and praiseworthy brochure by Walter Legge, which is included with the albums. And the equally witty accompaniment is at all times as much of a delight to the ear as it is to the mind.

If Beethoven's *Symphony No. 5* is the first-choice album for any record library, VM-313, 314, and 315 are certainly next, not only for opera fans but for all music lovers. We personally know of no other set of disks (with the possible exception of those which comprise the other three complete Mozart recordings) which are likely to afford so many short hours of pleasurable listening.

In addition to Fassbaender and Nash, the cast includes Roy Henderson (the Count), Aulikki Rautawaara (the Countess), Audrey Mildmay (Susanna), Louise Helletsgruber (Cherubino), Constance Willis (Marcellina), Norman Allin and Italo Tajo (Bartolo), Winifred Radford (Barbarina), Fergus Dunlop (Antonio), and Morgan Jones (Don Curzio).

RACHMANINOFF (SERGEI)

RACHMANINOFF: Rhapsody on a Theme by Paganini, Op. 43. Sergei Rachmaninoff (piano) & Philadelphia Orchestra, conducted by Leopold Stokowski. Three 12" records (6 sides) in Set VM-250†; price complete with album \$3.67.

As with the diffuse impressionist style of Delius in *Brigg Fair*, the masterly use of theme-and-variations form added so much structural power to the typically loose Russian Romanticism of Rachmaninoff in this famous "concerto" that many critics (among them, your reviewer) consider it the composer-pianist's most durable work.

Composed during the summer of 1934, the work is as daring as it is unusual. It took courage to essay another sheaf of variations on Paganini's 24th *Caprice*, in the face of the formidable set for piano by Brahms. And there is distinct novelty in Rachmaninoff's choice of a solo instrument and orchestra — if our records are correct, only Franck and Dohnanyi have made similar additions to the repertoire.

The results of this venture certainly justify the effort. The *Rhapsody* is a work of dazzling virtuosity and remarkable ingenuity, both in the technical demands it makes upon the player and in its resourceful development of musical ideas. Altho the ghost of Tchaikowsky stalks through its pages, the forceful personality of the dynamic composer-pianist is constantly dominant.

It is not surprising, therefore, that Rachmaninoff should have been selected as soloist for his own work, for in few other compositions is such a specifically individual style and technique on the part of the soloist essential to a just interpretation. The requisite strength of mind and of digital dexterity have been possessed in this generation by Rachmaninoff alone.

Comparison of the one competitive version on records (VM-855) is a case in point. Berio Moisevitch has the dexterity but neither the drive nor the discipline needed for the poetic illumination of music which, if not profound, is decidedly not the superficial display piece he makes of it.

Nevertheless, VM-855 is a marvelous recording—one that realistically captures the full resonance of Moiseivitch's piano and the London Philharmonic Orchestra. The Rächmaninoff-Philadelphia entry belongs, on the other hand, to a period around 1935 when Victor engineers were apparently experimenting with a new technique.

But despite the mechanical diminuendi in the last grooves of each record side, and the dead sound of the composer's instrument, VM-250 is well-balanced, clear, and vibrant. And Stokowski and the Philadelphia Orchestra have rarely given better support.

An exciting album, again available but only in automatic couplings.

SCHUMANN (ROBERT)

SCHUMANN: Concerto, A Minor, Op. 54. Myra Hess (piano) & Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Walter Goehr. Four 12" records (8 sides) in Set VM-473†; price complete with album \$4.72.

Discollectors are indeed fortunate that one of the most popular scores in the repertoire — and certainly the most complete major example of German Romanticism — is preserved on records in an effective performance by the contemporary pianist who is so closely identified

with it that there are some musical wags who will swear that she wrote it.

Sir Donald Tovey was quite right in referring to this joyous work as "recklessly pretty," but he was equally just in pointing out that many of the melodies attain a beauty and depth quite transcendent of mere prettiness. Indeed, they and the intriguing rhythms all but conceal the bold and free, but beautifully balanced structure.

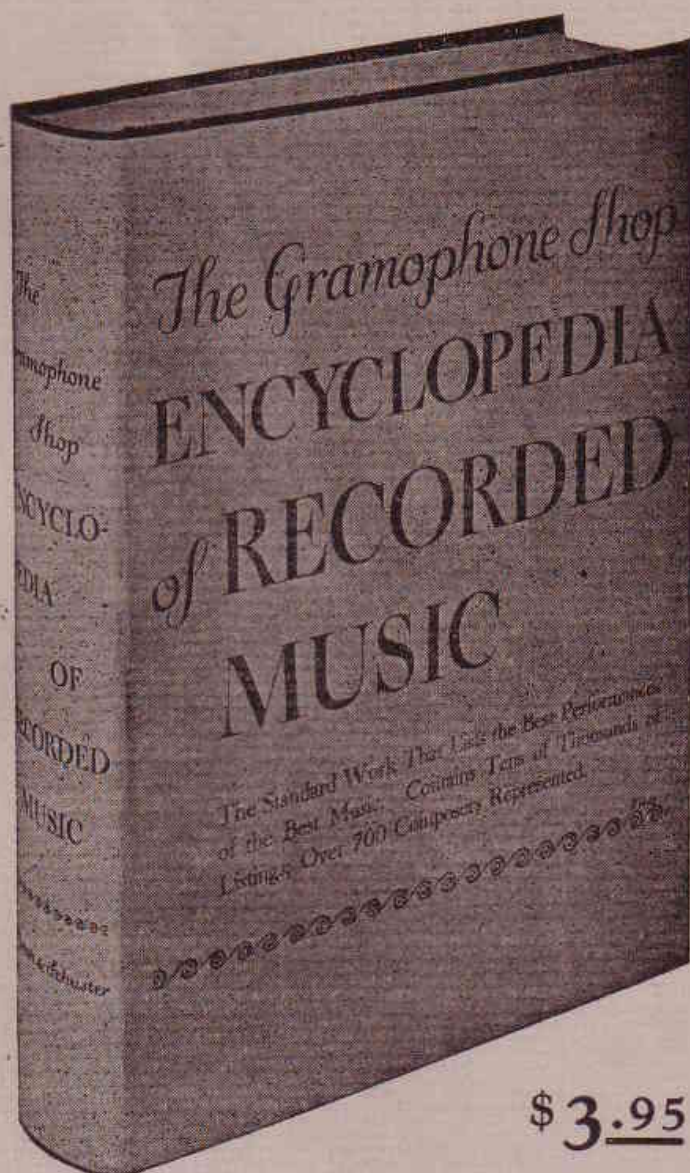
Repeated hearings will, however, make even the laziest listener aware of such marvelous details as the first movement's fine cadenza (unusual in that it seems a natural outgrowth, rather than a conventional interruption) and the inspired entrance of the march, a few pages later.

Since the entire "rhapsody" was composed for (and achieved its first fame at the hands of) Schumann's wife, Clara, it is entirely fitting that it should be nicknamed today "the Myra Hess Concerto," especially in view of her highly Romantic phrasing, assured technique, and warm tone, in VM-473. Goehr's rather professorial conducting lacks the supple grace of Hess' playing, but the orchestra performs admirably.

The recording is by no means recent, but it was an outstanding HMV issue several years ago and still retains a high degree of clarity and sonority. Pressings are, of course, domestic.

A new supply of VM-473 is limited to automatic couplings.

"Though a quantity of other books has been produced to annotate the literature of recorded music with various degrees of critical thoroughness, this 'Encyclopedia' must be recognized as a source-book beyond compare." Irving Kolodin, in the NEW YORK SUN, 10/23/42



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"... an invaluable handbook ... all the care and scholarship that have gone into the making of this book having been exercised, for once, in the direction of completeness." Virgil Thomson, in the NEW YORK HERALD-TRIBUNE, 12/20/42

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